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**NON'T
STAY THERE!**



ILLINOIS DOCUMENTS

One of the big excuses for not keeping a child in a car seat is that he won't stay there. This is an excuse, not a reason. Allowing a child to ride unrestrained is no more reasonable than letting a child play in the street or poke pins in electrical sockets. There are certain things children must learn to accept for their own safety - and buckling up is one of them. It is up to the parent to teach the child.

Here are some clues to successful teaching.....



**Illinois Department
of Transportation**



1. **Start Early** - Your infant should come home from the hospital in an approved car safety seat and never ride without one from then on. Children who start out in seats as infants are much easier to keep in seats as toddlers.
2. **Be Consistent** - Always buckle your child. Not using the restraint system (because you're only going a few blocks) confuses the child. It introduces an option the child can't understand and which doesn't really exist. Children learn from consistency.
3. **Use Words** - As your infant turns into a toddler and starts using language, explain in simple words why they must be restrained. Showing with a doll what happens in a crash helps. End with "Mommy loves you so much, she never wants you to get hurt!" Another good line is "I'm buckling you up because I love you."



4. **Set an Example** - Children want, more than anything, to be like adults. If adults they adore are consistent users of belts, then they will try to be like them. Show them that you are buckled also. This is especially important for Daddys and sons.
5. **Use a Travel Bag** - The biggest reason children try to unbuckle is boredom. Keep them busy and they will be content. A bag of travel toys, books, coloring papers, etc. will fill the time. Keep one in the car and change the toys every so often.



6. **Let Them See Out** - Choose a car safety seat that elevates the toddler and preschooler. This allows the child to see the country, cars and trucks, signs and people.
7. **Be Firm** - Almost every child at some time will try to get out of their restraint. Don't panic! When this happens, immediately stop the car. Lecture the child in a very firm serious voice and rebuckle. If the child again unbuckles, a repeat of the same procedure with a quick meaningful swat on the bottom will often do the trick. This may happen several times in a few days. Be firm and consistent and the child will learn there is no way to get around you.

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8. **Be Smart** - If a week of consistently applied discipline doesn't work, you will have to outsmart your child. Examine your car safety seat and see what you can add to it to make it escape proof. You might have to add a ribbon knotted around straps or wrap the buckles with a wash cloth that you then safety pin. This won't be necessary for very long - just until the child gets the message that you mean business.
9. **Be Comforting** - Pat your child, jostle his seat, sing, hum and play games. These will all make your child feel more contented and happy.

It will also make them feel loved..... which is what car safety seats are all about!!!



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Tried and True Kid Entertainers in the Car

Infants

Someone sitting close
Pictures to look at on the seat
Many, many rattles
Teethers
Photo books
Patting, stroking, jostling the seat
Little things to munch on - when old enough - like
Cheerios

Toddlers and Preschoolers

Colorforms
Fischer Price people
Little dolls
Matchbox cars
Chalkboard and chalk
Coloring book
Puzzles that are magnetized
Rubik's cube (just for turning)
Large wooden bead to string
Books, books and more books - especially Richard
Scary with lots of things to look at on each page.
Tape player and song and story tapes - especially
sing-a-longs and story tapes with books with
pictures
Sewing cards - 4 and 5-year-olds
Dolly Pops
Magic slates

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